

Lt. Governor's Newsletter to the South Carolina Senior Community  
January 2005 Table of Contents

1. Lt. Governor's Commission on Aging for Review and Evaluation, chaired by Newberry College President Dr. Mick Zais, has been meeting to firm up plans for state White House Conference on Aging.
2. Lt. Governor's 5 for 2005 legislative initiative is moving forward.
3. Sen. Jim DeMint was appointed to the Senate Select Committee on Aging.
4. Silver Haired Legislature Speaker Tom Lloyd of West Columbia and Speaker Pro Tem Chester Tomson of Orangeburg were our first two seniors of the day in the Legislature.
5. Lt. Governor Bauer encouraged by the new benefits Medicare is providing, especially the "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam.
6. Lt. Governor's Office on Aging releases the delegate allocation plan for state White House Conference on Aging April 25-27.
7. Charleston Post and Courier reports flu vaccine is available in the state.
8. As you do your tax preparation planning, please keep in mind that you can check off \$1 for the ElderCare Trust Fund.

# The Lieutenant Governor's Newsletter to South Carolina's Senior Community

We are off to an excellent start to what is shaping up to be a wonderful year for seniors in South Carolina. I'd like to thank all of you who came to my meet and greet reception after the State of the State address. It was good to see so many seniors willing to brave a chilly night to travel to Columbia to share their enthusiasm and viewpoints.

Here are some items of interest to our senior community:

First, our Commission on Aging for Review and Evaluation, chaired by Newberry College President Dr. Mick Zais, has been meeting to firm up our plans for our White House Conference on Aging. We are benefiting from some cutting edge research from our academic and industry advisors, who are grouped together under the banner of the Coalition for Successful Aging. These two groups plus the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging, the 10 Area Agencies on Aging and the South Carolina Conference on Aging Partnership are all working together to make this a successful event.

Second, our 5 for 2005 legislative initiative is moving forward. The Governor included our request for five new ombudsmen in his executive budget, and our Ways and Means subcommittee was receptive to our plans to add a sixth ombudsman to coordinate a volunteer ombudsman program, which we hope to launch later this year. Both of these issues are extremely important for the seniors in both nursing homes and extended living facilities in our state. The addition of five new ombudsmen will bring our state to the national standard of one ombudsman to every 2,000 facility beds, and the addition of a volunteer ombudsman program will add South Carolina to the list of 46 states that have implemented a volunteer program. Advocates and the long term care industry joined with us to shape this new program, where each nursing home and assisted living facility will be free to participate and help train the volunteers to play a active role in advocating for the health and well-being all residents. The volunteer coordinator will have the responsibility to help recruit, screen, train and supervise the volunteers on a statewide basis.

Third, we are pleased to see that Sen. Jim DeMint was appointed to the Senate Committee on Aging. This provides an unprecedented opportunity for our seniors to be represented in discussions of aging issues at both the state and federal level.

Fourth, Silver Haired Legislature Speaker Tom Lloyd of West Columbia and Speaker Pro Tem Chester Tomson of Orangeburg were our first two seniors of the day in the Legislature. Our seniors of the day are introduced by their resident senator, and serve as a resource person for aging issues that day. If you or your

organization would like to join the Silver Haired Legislature in participating, please let me know.

Fifth, I'm encouraged by the new benefits Medicare is providing, especially the "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam. Since my office assumed control of the Office on Aging, one of my biggest concerns has been preventive care. I hope everyone eligible for these new benefits takes advantage of them, and that they feel this is one more step toward living a healthier life. About 10,000 South Carolinians turning 65 in 2005 are eligible for the new "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam. It is a thorough review of the beneficiary's health, coupled with education and counseling about needed preventive services and screenings. It must occur in the first six months after receiving Part B coverage. The exam will cost recipients 20 percent of the Medicare-approved amount after they meet their yearly Part B deductible, which is \$110 for 2005. Since this may be their first Medicare-covered service, it is possible beneficiaries will meet their entire 2005 Part B deductible at this visit.

Sixth, we have just released the delegate allocation plan for our state White House Conference on Aging April 25-27. Delegates are allotted by each of the 10 Area Agencies on Aging. The actual application will be placed on the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging web site, which is [www.aging.sc.gov](http://www.aging.sc.gov)

The allotment is as follows: Region 1, Appalachia 94 (Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg); Region 2, Upper Savannah 25 (Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick and Saluda); Region 3, Catawba 26 (Chester, Lancaster, York and Union); Region 4, Central Midlands 49 (Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry and Richland); Region 5, Lower Savannah 38 (Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, and Orangeburg); Region 6, Santee Lynches 26 (Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter); Region 7, Pee Dee 40 (Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marion and Marlboro); Region 8, Waccamaw 32 (Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg); Region 9, Trident 48 (Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester); and Region 10, Lowcountry 22 (Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper). To be considered for a state delegate slot, please contact your Area Agency on Aging.

Seventh, the Charleston Post and Courier is reporting that flu vaccine is available in the state. Reporter Holly Auer writes that "South Carolina still has at least 10,000 shots available for patients who haven't had a shot yet." If you have not received your shot, please call your physician or your local DHEC health department.

Eighth, as you do your tax preparation planning, please keep in mind that you can check off \$1 for the ElderCare Trust Fund. Your small contribution can bring big dividends by helping fund innovative programs for seniors.

I'll close by reminding you that I welcome the opportunity to assist you. Please call my office at (803) 734-2080 or call the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging toll-free line at 1-800-868-9095.

Until next time, André  
January 31, 2005